

**CHAPTER 30****SIGN CONTROL REGULATIONS**

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**30.01 INTENT AND PURPOSE.**

The purpose of this chapter is to regulate the erection and maintenance of outdoor signs; to provide for the removal of unsafe or unlawful signs and to limit the proliferation of billboards and other off-premise signs. It is also intended that each occupant of a property having a need for the communication offered by signs be permitted to fulfill that need, provided that it is done within the confines of his/her own property and in accordance with the regulations imposed by this ordinance and without endangering public safety and without substantial annoyance to others. Finally, given the extensive investment made by the public and private sectors in revitalizing the Riverfront Conservation District and the Downtown Beloit Business Improvement District banning the further erection of billboards and other off-premise signs in those districts is deemed to be in the public interest.

**30.02 SCOPE.**

The provisions of this chapter shall regulate the location, size, lighting, number, height, manner of support, construction, alteration, repair, maintenance and erection of all signs, their appurtenant and auxiliary devices within the City.

**30.03 DEFINITIONS.**

In this chapter the following words and phrases shall have the meanings set forth in this section:

- (1) **ANIMATED SIGN.** Any sign, all or part of which moves, whether such movement is wind driven or motor driven, or which simulates movement. Animated signs include, but are not limited to, steamers, pennants, propellers and search lights. Animated signs do not include banners or other temporary signs which are not designed or erected to be blown by the wind or flashing signs.
- (2) **APPROVED COMBUSTIBLE PLASTIC.** A plastic material more than 0.05 inch in thickness which burns at a rate of not more than 2-1/2 inches per minute when subjected to the ASTM standard test for flammability of plastics in sheets of 0.06 inch thickness.
- (3) **BILLBOARD.** An off-premise sign larger than 100 square feet in size that is either freestanding or wall mounted.
- (4) **CIVIC INTEREST SIGN.** A sign specifically related to civic, cultural or school accomplishments or directing attention to public scenic areas or public sites of historical significance.
- (5) **COMBINATION ON-PREMISE/OFF-PREMISE SIGN.** A sign which indicates the name or street address of the establishment where such sign is located or to which it is affixed and which directs attention to a product or commodity not exclusively related to the premises but which is sold or offered upon such premises.
- (6) **COMMUNITY.** The City of Beloit, Town of Beloit and the Town of Turtle in Wisconsin and the City of South Beloit in Illinois. This term does not pertain to the area that this ordinance regulates but rather to where advertised products and services are provided.
- (7) **CONSTRUCTION SIGN.** An on-premise sign offering information related to a building or structure in the process of being erected or altered on the premises where the sign is situated, or identifying the person or firm involved in its design and construction.
- (8) **DIRECTIONAL SIGN.** An on-premise sign offering directional information related to the premise upon which the sign is located.
- (9) **DOUBLE FACED SIGN.** A sign having 2 faces, each face being of equal area and identical proportions to the other and with each face located on the sign structure so as to be exactly opposite the other.

- (10) DOWNTOWN BELOIT BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT. The area shown on a map entitled, "Downtown Beloit Business Improvement District." This area primarily relates to that area which is the central interest and focus of the Downtown Beloit Association, also referred to as the Downtown Business District.
- (11) EXTERNAL SIGN. An outdoor sign.
- (12) FLASHING SIGN. Any directly or indirectly illuminated sign that exhibits changing natural or artificial light, including flashing, blinking or intermittent lights. A flashing sign is not an animated sign.
- (13) GLARING SIGN. A sign with a light source or reflected light of such brightness as to constitute a safety hazard or public nuisance.
- (14) GRADE. The average surface elevation of the ground within a 15-foot radius of any sign, building or structure supporting a sign. The average surface elevation is the elevation midway between the highest elevation and the lowest elevation within the 15-foot radius.
- (15) GROUND SIGN. A sign supported by or embedded into the ground and not more than six feet above grade.
- (16) IDENTIFICATION SIGN. An on-premise sign, the face of which exceeds 1 square foot in area, which displays the name or address of a building, the name or logo of a business or a description of the business, service or occupation conducted on the premise.
- (17) ILLUMINATED SIGN. A sign lighted by artificial means, whether from within or from a light source located outside the sign, whether such outside lighting is attached, affixed to or independent of the sign.
- (18) INDEXING SIGN. A device which displays three or more sign faces that turn and stop; a multi-prism sign.
- (19) INTERNAL SIGN. An indoor sign visible only to persons inside the building where the sign is located.
- (20) INFLATABLE SIGN. Any sign capable of being filled with and expanded by air or other gas.
- (21) KIOSK. A freestanding structure upon which temporary information such as posters, notices and announcements are posted.
- (22) MALL. A shopping center where stores front on both sides of a pedestrian way, which may be enclosed or open.
- (23) MARQUEE. A hood, canopy, awning or permanent construction that projects from a wall of a building, usually above an entrance.
- (24) MARQUEE SIGN. A sign attached to, painted upon or hung from a marquee.
- (25) MEMORIAL SIGN. A tablet, plaque or other sign memorializing a person, event, structure, or site.
- (26) NAMEPLATE. An identification sign the face of which is one square foot or less in area.
- (27) NONCOMBUSTIBLE MATERIAL. As defined in Chapter ILHR 51, Wis. Adm. Code.
- (28) NONRESIDENTIAL SIGN. A sign on a premise in a residential or B-1 zoning district where there is no residence on the premises where the sign is located; or a sign on a property where there is a residence but the sign's message is not related to the residence where the sign is located or the occupants of that residence. Nonresidential sign includes, but is not limited to, signs at schools, churches, municipal facilities or other premises relating to activities or uses permitted in a residential zoning district.
- (29) OFFICIAL SIGN. A sign required by or erected as a result of any law, ordinance or decision of a local, state, or federal legislative body.

- (30) **OFF-PREMISE SIGN.** An outdoor sign, including a billboard, which directs attention to a business, commodity, product, service, activity or entertainment not exclusively related to the premises where such sign is located, but not including such signs directing attention to the business on the premises or to a brand name of a product or commodity with which the business is specifically identified and which is sold or offered on the premises.
- (31) **ON-PREMISE SIGN.** An outdoor sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, product, service, activity or entertainment sold or offered on the premises where such sign is located.
- (32) **POLE SIGN.** A sign that is mounted on one or more freestanding poles or other freestanding vertical supports and that has a height of six feet or more above grade.
- (33) **POLITICAL SIGN.** A sign announcing or supporting political candidates or issues in connection with a national, state or local election.
- (34) **PORTABLE SIGN.** A temporary sign designed to be moved from place to place and not affixed to a structure or the ground.
- (35) **PROJECTING SIGN.** A wall sign attached directly to and extending 12 inches or more from the wall of a building.
- (36) **READER BOARD.** An on-premise sign which is designed to permit message changes, either manually or electronically, on the sign face.
- (37) **REAL ESTATE SIGN.** An on-premise sign advertising that the premise is for sale, lease or rent, and containing information as to the person or firm to contact about the premise.
- (38) **RESIDENTIAL SIGN.** A sign which displays a message which relates to a residence on the premises where the sign is located or to the occupants of the residence. Residential sign includes, but is not limited to, real estate sign and nameplate.
- (39) **RIVERFRONT CONSERVATION DISTRICT.** The area bounded on the north by the city limits, on the east by Park Avenue, on the south by the Wisconsin state line, on the southwest by Bluff Street from the state line to its intersection with Merrill Street and on the northwest by Sixth Street, also known as Afton Road, from its intersection with Merrill Street to its intersection with the north city limits.
- (40) **ROOF SIGN.** A sign painted, mounted, or erected upon the roof of a building and which extends above the top edge of a building with a flat roof, the eave line of a building with a gambrel, gable or hip roof or the deck line of a building with a mansard roof. A roof sign does not include a navigational sign painted upon the roof of a building if the roof sign is not visible from the ground.
- (41) **SANDWICH BOARD.** An outdoor, self-supporting, on-premise sign consisting of two sign faces hinged together.
- (42) **SIGN.** Any sign, billboard, statuary or search light which is used, capable of being used or intended to be used to attract attention to a specific subject matter for the purpose of identification, information or advertising.
- (43) **SIGN AREA.** The surface area of a sign face.
- (44) **SIGN CLASSIFICATION.** The classification of signs by reference to their purpose as either off-premise, on-premise, combination off-premise/on-premise, construction, directional, nameplate, official, political, real estate or temporary.
- (45) **SIGN FACE.** That portion of the sign upon, which the message or subject matter of the sign is displayed by graphics, symbols, insignias, logos, pictures or other means. Sign face also includes the frame around the portion of the sign upon which the message or subject matter is displayed. Sign face does not include the sign structure, except where such parts are used to display a message.

- (46) **SIGN STRUCTURE.** That part of a sign, except the sign frame, which is intended to support the sign face. Sign structure includes poles, guy wires, braces, lattice work or other supports for the sign and sign face. Sign structure does not include the ground, a building, a fence, awning, canopy, marquee or other structure to which the sign structure is attached.
- (47) **SIGN TYPE.** The designation of a sign by reference to its means of support, such as ground sign, marquee sign, projecting sign, roof sign, or wall sign.
- (48) **SIMULATED TRAFFIC SIGN.** Any sign or reflector prohibited by § 346.41, Wis. Stats.
- (49) **SUSPENDED SIGN.** A sign which is hung by its top from a canopy, marquee, awning, porch or similar structure. A suspended sign may or may not be rigidly affixed to the structure from which it is hung.
- (50) **TEMPORARY SIGN.** A portable sign or a sign made of cloth, canvas, fabric or other nondurable or combustible material, with or without structural frame, and used for one of the following purposes:
  - (a) To announce a special event related to the business conducted on the premises.
  - (b) To announce authorized community wide charitable drives.
  - (c) To extend greetings of a religious or public holiday.
  - (d) To announce conventions of a group or association.
  - (e) To announce a community event.

Political signs, real estate signs and construction signs exempted from permit requirements by §30.05(5) of this chapter are not temporary signs.

- (51) **WALL SIGN.** A sign entirely supported by, through or painted upon the face of a building or structure or the component members comprising all or part of such face. Signs supported by or painted on fences shall be considered to be wall signs.
- (52) **WINDOW SIGN.** An indoor sign placed on a window and intended to be visible to persons outside of the building in which the sign is display.
- (53) **WORKMANLIKE.** Executed in a skill manner; e.g. plumb, level, square, in line, undamaged, done without marring adjacent work and done by using materials that match adjacent work.
- (54) **ZONING DISTRICT.** The zoning districts established by the Zoning Ordinances of the City of Beloit.

**30.04 PERMIT TO ERECT OR ALTER SIGN.****(1) SIGN PERMIT REQUIRED.**

- (a) Regular Sign Permits. Except as provided in subsection (5), no outdoor sign shall hereafter be erected, constructed, altered, repaired or moved from one location to another, whether on the same premise or to another premise, until a permit has been issued by the Division of Housing Services.
- (b) Permits for Temporary Signs. Permits for temporary signs shall also be issued by the Division of Housing Services. Permits for temporary signs shall expire 31 days after issuance.
- (c) Special Sign Permits. Except as provided in § 30.22(3), no outdoor sign, whether temporary or otherwise, shall be hung on any city property or any highway right-of-way, including the terrace thereof, without approval by the City Manager under § 18.01(3) and (4) or the City Council under §§ 11.05, 11.06 and 11.07 of the Code of General Ordinances. If such approval is given, it shall be upon the condition that the person hanging such sign shall be responsible for the cost of removing the same at the required time.

(2) **APPLICATION.** Application for a regular sign permit shall be made on a form prescribed by the Division of Housing Services and shall be filed with that division. All applications shall be accompanied by the appropriate permit fee prescribed by § 30.05.

(3) **OWNER'S CONSENT.** Applications shall be accompanied by the written consent of the owner or lessee of the premise upon which the sign is to be erected.

(4) **PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS.** Before any permit is granted for the erection or alteration of a sign, sign plans and specifications shall be filed with the Division of Housing Services showing dimensions, materials, location on the lot and required details of construction including loads, stresses and anchorage. Whenever a sign is erected or constructed in conjunction with other construction that requires a landscaping plan, the location of the sign shall be part of the landscaping plan.

(5) **SIGNS, SIGN ALTERATIONS AND REPAIRS EXEMPT FROM PERMIT REQUIREMENTS.** No permit shall be required for signs or sign alterations specified below. Such exemption shall not be construed to relieve the owner of the sign from the responsibility for erection, alteration and maintenance of the sign according to all other provisions of this chapter.

(a) **Exempt Signs.**

- 1. Any unlighted wall sign, independent of other signs, which is painted on or attached to a building; which is not more than one square foot in area; and which is not a part of another wall sign.
- 2. Letters, numbers, or symbols, painted on or attached to a wall or window, giving the street address of the building upon which it is painted or attached.
- 3. A sign used to advertise public demonstrations or to promote civic welfare or charitable enterprises, when such activities have been approved by the City Council.
- 4. Official signs.
- 5. Political signs not exceeding 32 square feet in sign area.

6. Signs erected on a municipal, state, county, or federal building which announce the name, location, nature of occupancy and information as to the use of or admission to the premises.
  7. Real estate signs provided such signs are not in excess of limitations imposed below:
    - a. Such signs in the R-1 through R-3, IR, CV, TD, PO, and PLI districts shall not exceed 3 feet in height and 9 square feet in sign area.
    - b. Such signs in the R-4 and R-5 and in the B-1 and B-2 districts shall not exceed 4 feet in height and 32 square feet in sign area.
    - c. Such signs in the B-3 through B-6, IB, IM and M-1 through M-3 districts shall not exceed 6 feet in height and 60 square feet in sign area.
  8. Construction signs provided such signs do not exceed 6 feet in height or 60 square feet in sign area.
  9. Wall signs and scoreboards at athletic fields.
- (b) Exempt Sign Alterations and Repairs. The following activities do not constitute alterations or repairs for which a permit is required.
1. The repair or replacement of moving parts of an animated sign.
  2. The replacement of light bulbs on illuminated signs.
  3. The painting of any sign.
  4. The changing of any message or pictorial display on the existing sign face.
  5. Repairs to signs, other than nonconforming signs which are damaged by wind, other acts of God, traffic accidents or vandalism.
- (6) IDENTIFICATION OF SIGN OWNER. Every sign for which a permit is issued under this section shall provide the name and address of the owner of the sign.

**30.05 SIGN PERMIT FEES.**

- (1) **AMOUNT OF FEE.** Before receiving a permit to construct, alter or move a sign, the sign owner shall pay to the Division of Housing Services a permit fee as hereinafter set forth.

<b>SIGN PERMIT FEE SCHEDULE</b>	
<b>ON-PREMISE SIGNS (Other than Pole Signs)</b>	<b>FEE</b>
0 - 25 Square Feet of Sign Area	\$10.00
26 - 50 Square Feet of Sign Area	\$30.00
51 - 100 Square Feet of Sign Area	\$45.00
101 + Square Feet of Sign Area	\$100.00
<b>ON-PREMISE POLE SIGNS</b>	
100 Square Feet or less of Sign Area	\$50.00
101 + Square Feet of Sign Area	\$125.00 + \$.20 Sq. Ft.
<b>OFF-PREMISE SIGNS</b>	
1 - 100 Square Feet of Sign Area	\$50.00 + \$.25/Sq. Ft.
101 - 200 Square Feet of Sign Area	\$100.00 + \$.25/Sq. Ft.
201 - 300 Square Feet of Sign Area	\$300.00
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	
Sandwich Boards	\$5.00
Portable Signs	\$10.00
Temporary Signs	\$10.00
Flat fee all others	\$25.00

- (2) **COMPUTATION OF SIGN AREA FOR DETERMINATION OF PERMIT FEE.** The square footage of a sign face shall be computed by one of the following methods:
- Signs with Frames.** Whenever a sign has a frame around the sign's message area, the sign and the sign frame shall constitute the sign face.
  - Painted, Non-solid, and Irregularly Shaped Signs.** Whenever a sign is irregularly shaped, painted on a wall, fence or other non-sign structure or whenever letters, numbers, pictures or other objects are hung from or attached to a wall, fence or other structure, the sign area shall constitute the area within the square or rectangle, the dimensions of which shall be measured from the following points:
    - The top of the highest painted area, letter, number or other symbol in the sign; and
    - The bottom of the lowest painted area, letter, number or other symbol in the sign; and
    - The outer edge of the painted area, letters, numbers or other symbols furthest to the right and left in the sign.
  - Multiple Signs.** Whenever more than one sign subject to the regular permit requirements of this section is placed on a wall, pole or other supporting structure, a permit shall be obtained and a separate permit fee shall be paid for each sign.



**30.06 SIGN LICENSE INSPECTION FEE.**

- (1) **LICENSE REQUIRED.** No sign listed in subsection (6) of this section, except signs exempt under subsection (5) of this section, shall be constructed or maintained within the city unless the owner of the sign obtains a license for the sign in accordance with the provisions of this section.
- (2) **LICENSE PERIOD.** Sign licenses shall be issued for 3-year terms commencing on June 1 of the first year and ending on May 31 of the third year.
- (3) **INITIAL LICENSE.** If the owner of a sign obtains a permit to erect, construct or alter a sign in accordance with Sections 30.04 and 30.05 of this chapter, the owner need not obtain a license under this section until June 1 of the year immediately following the calendar year during which such sign permit was issued.
- (4) **APPLICATION FOR SIGN LICENSE.** An application for a sign license shall be made on a form prescribed by the Division of Housing Services. The license fee established by this section shall be paid to the City Treasurer upon completion of the license form. The completed application and a receipt for payment of the license fee shall be submitted to the Division of Housing Services prior to issuance of the license. The Division of Housing Services shall inspect the sign to be licensed under this section and shall not issue such license unless the sign complies with all other requirements of this chapter.
- (5) **SIGNS EXEMPT FROM LICENSE REQUIREMENT.** Signs exempt from the permit requirements of Sections 30.04 and 30.05 of this chapter shall also be exempt from the license requirements of this section. Signs in existence prior to the effective date of this section shall also be exempt.
- (6) **SIGN LICENSE INSPECTION FEES.** The fees for a sign license shall be as follows:

<b>SIGN LICENSE INSPECTION FEES</b>	
<b>On-Premise Pole Signs</b>	<b>3-Year License Fee</b>
100 Square Feet or less of Sign Area	\$50.00
101+ Square Feet of Sign Area	\$125.00 + \$.20/Sq. Ft.
<b>Off-Premise Signs</b>	
1 - 100 Square Feet of Sign Area	\$50.00 + \$.25/Sq. Ft.
101 - 200 Square Feet of Sign Area	\$100.00 + \$.25/Sq. Ft.
201 - 300 Square Fee of Sign Area	\$300.00 + \$.40/Sq. Ft.
<b>Marquee Signs</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>

- (7) **COMPUTATION OF SIGN FACE AREA FOR DETERMINATION OF LICENSE FEE.** The computation of the square footage of a sign face shall be done in accordance with Section 30.05(2) above.

**30.07 UNSAFE AND UNLAWFUL SIGNS.**

When any sign becomes insecure, in danger of falling, or otherwise unsafe, or if any sign shall be unlawfully installed, erected or maintained in violation of any of the provisions of this chapter, the owner, therefore the person or firm maintaining the same, shall upon written notice by the Division of Housing Services, forthwith in the case of immediate danger, and in other cases within no more than 30 days, make such sign conform to the provisions of this chapter or remove it. If within 30 days the order is not complied with, the Division of Housing Services shall cause removal of such sign at the expense of the owner or lessee of the sign by one of the following methods:

- (a) By instituting a court action demanding compliance with the order; or
- (b) Removal of such sign.

Where the owner or lessee of the sign cannot be located, or is unable to pay for the cost of removal, the owner of the land shall be jointly and severally liable for the expense of removal and the costs of such removal shall become a lien upon the property and shall be assessed and collected as a special tax upon the property.

**30.08 MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION.**

- (1) The Division of Housing Services shall order the owner of any sign that is not maintained in accordance with the provisions of this Code to make such repairs as necessary to bring the sign into compliance or to remove it within 30 days of the date of service of the order. The order shall be served in the manner prescribed by § 801.11, Wisconsin Stats., or by certified or registered mail addressed to the owner at the owner's last known address. If the owner fails to comply with the order within the time provided, the Director of Housing Services, or his designee, may issue a municipal citation to the owner for such violation and shall, in addition, cause the removal of the sign in accordance with the provisions of § 30.07.
- (2) All signs, together with all their supports, braces, guys and anchors shall be kept in good repair in accordance with this code and when not constructed of corrosion-resistive non-combustible materials, shall be painted when necessary to prevent corrosion.
- (3) It shall be the responsibility of the owner or lessee of every sign to maintain the immediate premises occupied by the sign in a clean, sanitary and healthful condition.
- (4) Every sign for which a license is required under § 30.06 shall be subject to periodic inspection. The Division of Housing Services shall perform an inspection of all licensed signs at least once during the license period.

**30.09 PROHIBITED SIGNS.**

- (1) CITY-WIDE PROHIBITION. Except as provided in Section 30.10, the following signs are expressly prohibited city-wide.
- (a) Animated Signs.
  - (b) Flashing Signs, not including time and temperature signs.
  - (c) Glaring Signs.
  - (d) Indexing Signs.
  - (e) Sandwich Boards, except sandwich boards not exceeding eight square feet per sign face may be used in the Downtown Beloit Improvement District and in malls.
  - (f) Roof Signs.
  - (g) Simulated Traffic Signs.
  - (h) Signs which obstruct or interfere with a motorist's view of any traffic sign, signal or other traffic.
  - (i) Projecting signs erected at other than right angles to the wall of a building or structure outside of the building line, which extend above the roof cornice or parapet wall, (or above the roof level when there is no cornice or parapet wall, and which obstruct access to the roof) is prohibited. Such signs shall be removed as provided in § 30.07 above.
  - (j) Signs which project into an alley right-of-way.
  - (k) Swinging suspended signs above sidewalks, except in the Downtown Beloit Business Improvement District and in malls.
  - (l) An unlicensed sign for which a license is required.
  - (m) A sign which advertises a business or product or service that has been discontinued for six months or longer.
  - (n) An off-premise sign with a single sign face area exceeding 300 square feet.
  - (o) An off-premise sign in a City park or within 300 feet of a City park.
- (2) SIGNS PROHIBITED IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND IN RIVERFRONT CONSERVATION DISTRICT. Except as provided in § 30.10, off-premise signs are prohibited in the Riverfront Conservation District and within an historic district.

**30.10 NONCONFORMING SIGNS.**

- (1) PERMITTED NONCONFORMING SIGNS. Any sign which did lawfully exist prior to the enactment or amendment of the provisions of this chapter but which does not conform to those provisions and any sign which is accessory to a legal nonconforming use, shall be deemed a legal nonconforming sign. No legal nonconforming sign shall be enlarged, extended, reconstructed or altered in any manner, except as follows:
- (a) The repair or replacement of moving parts of an animated sign.
  - (b) The replacement of light bulbs on illuminated signs.
  - (c) The painting or other ordinary maintenance of the sign.
  - (d) The changing of any message or pictorial display on the existing sign face.

- (2) **PROHIBITED NONCONFORMING SIGNS.** The following nonconforming signs are prohibited:
- (a) Unlawful Sign. A sign that was prohibited prior to, as well as after, the enactment or subsequent amendment of this ordinance.
  - (b) Damaged or Destroyed Sign. A legal nonconforming sign which is destroyed or damaged to the extent of 50 percent or more of its assessed value shall not be replaced or reinstalled or reconstructed. If the cost of replacing, reinstalling or reconstructing the sign is less than 50 percent of the assessed value of the sign, the sign may be restored. If the replacement, reinstallation or reconstruction is not completed within six months of the date that the damage or destruction occurred, the sign shall not be replaced, reinstalled or reconstructed. The sign owner shall have the burden of proving that the cost of replacing, reinstalling or reconstructing the sign is less than 50 percent of the assessed value of the sign and shall have the burden of proving that any replacement, reinstallation or reconstruction was completed within six months of the date that the damage or destruction occurred.
  - (c) Damaged or Destroyed Principal Structure. A legal nonconforming sign shall be removed if the principal structure on the premises to which it is accessory is damaged or destroyed to the extent of 50 percent or more of the principal structure's assessed value.

### **30.11 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL SIGNS.**

- (1) **ENGINEERING STANDARDS.** All signs, except temporary signs, shall be designed in accordance with good engineering practice and constructed and installed in a workmanlike manner in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.
- (2) **ILLUMINATION.** No sign shall be illuminated by other than electrical means and electrical devices and wiring shall be installed in accordance with the requirements of the Electrical Code. In no case shall an open flame or electric spark be used in or on any sign.
- (3) **ELECTRICAL CONNECTIONS.** No electrical connections shall be made from any sign to an electrical service except by an electrician licensed by the City. All electrical signs shall be approved by Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or shall be UL listed.
- (4) **OBSTRUCTION TO EXITWAYS.** No sign shall be erected so as to obstruct any fire escape, required exitway, window or door opening used as a means of egress, or to prevent free passage from one part of a roof to another part thereof or access thereto.
- (5) **OBSTRUCTION TO VENTILATION AND LIGHT.** No sign shall obstruct or otherwise interfere with any opening required for light or ventilation.

### **30.12 SIGNS WITHIN 15 FEET OF HIGHWAY.**

- (1) **GROUND SIGNS.** Ground signs located within 15 feet of any public right-of-way shall not extend more than 36 inches above street grade.
- (2) **OTHER SIGNS.** Signs exceeding 36 inches in height above street grade and located within 15 feet of any public right-of-way shall be erected and maintained so the lowest part of the sign, excluding the supports, shall be not less than 10 feet above street grade.

**30.13 MATERIAL FOR SIGN FACES.**

- (1) **SIGNS LESS THAN FIVE FEET ABOVE STREET GRADE.** The face of a sign not extending more than 5 feet above street grade may be constructed of plastic, wood, or other materials designed to withstand the elements.
- (2) **WALL SIGNS, PROJECTING SIGNS, MARQUEE SIGNS AND POLE SIGNS.** Wall signs exceeding 40 square feet in sign area, projecting signs, marquee signs, and pole signs shall be constructed entirely of fire retardant materials.
- (3) **BANNERS AND TEMPORARY SIGNS.** Temporary signs and banners attached to or suspended from a building shall be strongly constructed and securely attached to their supports. They shall be removed as soon as torn or damaged or upon the expiration date of the sign permit, whichever occurs first. Temporary signs made of combustible material shall be not more than 100 square feet in area.

**30.14 PROJECTING SIGNS.**

- (1) **MAXIMUM PROJECTION.** No sign may project more than 6 feet beyond the face of the wall of the building to which it is attached. A projecting sign shall be at least 10 feet above any street or sidewalk grade over which it projects. Within the Downtown Beloit Business Improvement District, a projecting sign shall not exceed 6 square feet in sign face area; shall not project more than 4 feet from the wall of the building to which it is attached and shall not be illuminated.
- (2) **EXTENSION.** Wall signs shall not be erected to extend above the top of the wall, nor to extend beyond the ends of the wall to which they are attached.

**30.15 INDEMNIFICATION AND HOLD HARMLESS CLAUSE BY OWNERS AND LESSEES.**

Any person, firm or corporation desiring to erect any sign extending over a sidewalk and which is so located as to constitute a potential hazard to persons or property on such sidewalk, shall procure comprehensive general liability insurance providing coverage for bodily injury and for property damage of not less than \$100,000 per person and \$300,000 per accident. The owner of any sign extending over a sidewalk shall, as a condition of issuance of the permit, sign a statement by which that person agrees to indemnify and hold the City harmless from any liability for claims for property damage or personal injury caused by or arising out of defects in the construction or maintenance of the sign.

**30.16 SIGNS IN THE PUBLIC WAY.**

No sign, except as provided in §§ 30.04(1)(b) and 30.14(1) and (2) above, shall be placed so that any part of the sign is upon, above or extends into, any public way, public sidewalk or publicly owned land. The provisions of this section shall not be construed to prohibit the placing of traffic signs, sandwich boards or subdivision entrance features in the public way if such placement is approved by the City Council.

**30.17 OFF-PREMISE SIGNS NEAR RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS.**

- (1) No off-premise sign shall be located within 100 feet of any residential zoning district boundary line unless such sign is effectively screened from the view from the residence by a building, wall, solid fence or evergreen plantings, and the plan is reviewed and approved by the Director of Planning.
- (2) Where evergreen plantings are used to provide the screening required by (1) above, such plantings shall be not less than 2 feet shorter than the height of the sign at the time of the planting and shall be spaced not further apart than the recommended spacing for such plantings. The evergreen plantings shall be continuously maintained to provide an effective screen or the sign shall be removed as provided in Section 30.07(1).
- (3) Commercial satellite dishes shall not be used for off-premise advertising.

**30.18 SIGNS LOCATED NEAR INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS.**

- (1) The provisions of Section 84.30(4), Wisconsin Statutes, are adopted and incorporated in this chapter by reference.
- (2) Where provisions of this chapter pertaining to signs located near interstate highways are more restrictive than the provisions of Section 84.30(4), Wisconsin Statutes, the provisions of this code shall not apply.

**30.19 CONSTRUCTION AND REAL ESTATE SIGNS.**

Construction and real estate signs shall be limited to one per lot. Real estate signs may be erected and maintained only during the period that the property is being actively offered for sale, rent or lease. Construction signs may be erected and maintained only during the time that actual construction activity is occurring. An additional real estate sign, not exceeding 100 square feet in sign face area, may be erected and maintained in a subdivision with more than 5 platted lots until all of the subdivision lots are sold.

**30.20 SIGN MOUNTING.**

Signs shall be mounted in one of the following manners:

- (1) Flat against a building or wall.
- (2) As double-faces signs.
- (3) In clusters which shall screen the back of the signs from public view.
- (4) Otherwise mounted so that the backs of the signs showing to the public are screened or painted and maintained in a neutral color or color that blends with the surrounding environment.

**30.21 SIGNS ON MARQUEES.**

Where signs are permitted on marquees, they shall be affixed flat to the vertical face thereof. Signs attached to the vertical face of a marquee shall not extend above or below the vertical face of the marquee nor beyond the outside edge of the marquee.

**30.22 PORTABLE SIGNS.**

Portable signs shall not be used on a permanent basis. A permit for a portable sign shall be issued for a period of 31 days. Portable signs shall not be permitted on the same zoning lot more frequently than 3 times during any calendar year nor more than once during any 60 day period. Such signs shall be located on the lot in compliance with applicable setback, area and height limitations for permanent signs.

**30.23 POLITICAL SIGNS.**

Political signs, not exceeding 32 square feet in area may be erected in all zoning districts of the City under the following conditions:

- (1) Such signs shall be erected not sooner than 60 days prior to election day and shall be removed within 10 days following the day of election.
- (2) Such signs on private property shall be erected in such a manner as not to interfere with sight lines of motorists along streets, alleys, and driveways.
- (3) Such signs may not be erected on the terrace of the street right-of-way, or on other publicly owned property without the consent of the City Manager.
- (4) Such signs shall not be erected on private property without the consent of the owner of the property upon which they are erected.

**30.24 SETBACK REQUIREMENTS.**

Signs shall be setback from property lines as set forth below.

- (1) **GENERAL RULE.** No ground sign, off-premise sign, pole sign or projecting sign shall be constructed, erected or hung within five feet of an adjoining property.
- (2) **RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS.** In residential zoning districts, all signs and the parts thereof shall be located not less than the setback required for buildings by the Zoning Code except that one kiosk and one other sign may be located in a required front or corner side yard. This exception does not apply to property devoted exclusively to residential, nontransient uses.
- (3) **BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICTS.** In business and industrial zoning districts, all signs and the parts thereof shall be located not less than the setback required for buildings, unless the Director of Planning determines that a variance to the set back requirement will not result in the sign obstructing vision of motorists or pedestrians so as to endanger public safety. One permitted sign is allowed per street frontage and may be located in a required front or corner side yard. Ground mounted signs and pole signs located in the front or corner side yards shall not interfere with or obstruct vision along the street in such a manner as to create an unsafe condition for pedestrians or operators of motor vehicles.

**30.25 SPACING OF OFF-PREMISE SIGNS.**

Billboards and other off-premise signs shall be spaced at intervals of not less than 1000 feet as measured along street right-of-way lines. This spacing requirement applies to signs on opposite sides of the same street and signs located on intersecting streets. In this section an off-premise double-faced sign and two back-to-back sign faces which are not more than 10 feet apart and screen each other's back from public view shall be deemed a single sign

**30.26 REGULATION OF SIGNS ON BASIS OF PURPOSE.**

The following chart indicates what signs, based on purpose, may be permitted in the various zoning districts of the city.

<b>ZONING DISTRICT</b>	<b>SIGN TYPES</b>									
	<b>OFF</b>	<b>ON</b>	<b>CB</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>DI</b>	<b>ID</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>POL</b>	<b>RE</b>	<b>TE</b>
<b><u>RESIDENTIAL</u></b>										
R1	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	R	P	P	P	R
R2	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	R	P	P	P	R
R3	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	R	P	P	P	R
R4	NP	NP	NP	P	P	R	P	P	P	R
R5	NP	NP	NP	P	P	R	P	P	P	R
IR	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	R	P	P	P	R
TD	P	NP	NP	P	P	R	P	P	P	R
<b><u>BUSINESS</u></b>										
B1	NP	P	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B2	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B3	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B4	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B5	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B6	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
IB	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
<b><u>INDUSTRIAL</u></b>										
M1	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
M2	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
M3	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
IM	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
<b><u>PLI, PO, CV</u></b>	NP	P	NP	P	P	P	P	NP	P	NP

ON = On-premise sign  
 OFF = Off-premise sign  
 P = Permitted  
 NP = Not Permitted  
 R = Restricted to nonresidential property  
 in a residence district,  
 such as churches and cemeteries

CB = Combination on-premise/off- premise sign  
 CO = Construction sign  
 DI = Directional sign  
 ID = Identification sign  
 NA = Nameplate sign  
 POL = Political sign  
 RE = Real Estate sign  
 TE = Temporary sign



**30.27 PERMITTED SIGN TYPES.**

Within the enumerated zoning districts of the Zoning Ordinance, sign types shall be permitted or not permitted according to the table set forth below:

<b>ZONING DISTRICT</b>	<b>TYPE OF SIGN</b>					
	<b>GR</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>PR</b>	<b>SUSP</b>	<b>WA</b>	<b>POS</b>
<b><u>RESIDENTIAL</u></b>						
R1	P	NP	NP	P	P	NP
R2	P	NP	NP	P	P	NP
R3	P	NP	NP	P	P	NP
R4	P	P	NP	P	P	NP
R5	P	P	NP	P	P	NP
IR	P	NP	NP	P	P	NP
TD	P	NP	NP	P	P	NP
<b><u>BUSINESS</u></b>						
B1	P	P	NP	P	P	P
B2	P	P	NP	P	P	P
B3	P	P	P*	P	P	P
B4	P	P	P*	P	P	P
B5	P	P	P*	P	P	P
B6	P	P	P*	P	P	NP
IB	P	P	NP	P	P	P
<b><u>INDUSTRIAL</u></b>						
M1	P	P	NP	P	P	P
M2	P	P	P	P	P	P
M3	P	P	P	P	P	P
IM	P	P	NP	P	P	P
<b><u>PLI, PO</u></b>	P	P	P	P	P	P
<b><u>CV</u></b>	P	NP	NP	NP	P	P

P = Permitted

NP = Not Permitted

GR = Ground Sign

MA = Marquee Sign

PR = Projecting Sign

SUSP = Suspended Sign

WA = Wall Sign

POS = Pole Sign

\* - See §30.14(1) regarding projecting signs in the Downtown Beloit Business Improvement District.

**30.28 HEIGHT OF SIGNS.**

The maximum permitted height of any sign in the enumerated zoning districts shall be as depicted in the table below. Where a sign is located within 100 feet of a dedicated and improved street or highway, the sign height shall be measured from street grade directly opposite the sign. Where a sign is more than 100 feet from a dedicated and improved street or highway the height shall be determined by the grade directly below the sign. No sign shall be erected at a height greater than the height permitted in this section and no variance shall be granted by the Board of Appeals.

<b>MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF SIGNS</b>			
<b>ZONING DISTRICT</b>	<b>Residential Sign</b>		<b>Non-Residential Sign</b>
	<b>Front or Corner Side Yard</b>	<b>Other Yard</b>	
R1 thru R5	3'	6'	6'
B1	3'	6'	10'
B2, B3, B6	N/A	N/A	20' *
B4, B5	N/A	N/A	30' *
M1	N/A	N/A	30'
M2, M3	N/A	N/A	50'
IR, TD	3'	6'	15'
IB, IM	N/A	N/A	50'
PLI, CV, PO	N/A	N/A	6'

N/A = Not Allowed

\* In the Downtown Beloit Business Improvement District, wall signs may exceed the maximum height provided that the wall sign does not extend beyond the top of the wall to which it is attached or beyond the top of the parapet on top of the wall to which it is attached, whichever is higher.

**30.29 MAXIMUM SIGN FACE.**

The maximum permitted sign face for each of the following types of signs in each of the following zoning districts shall be as follows:

<b>MAXIMUM SIZE OF SIGN</b>							
<b>ZONING DISTRICT</b>	<b>TYPE OF SIGN</b>						
	<b>R</b>	<b>NR</b>	<b>ON</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>DI</b>	<b>PO</b>	<b>OFF</b>
R1 thru R5, IR	1 SF	32 SF*		9 SF	2 SF	32 SF	NP
B1	1 SF	32 SF*	32 SF	9 SF	2 SF	32 SF	NP
B2			*100 SF	32 SF	5 SF	32 SF	NP
B3, B4, B5			*150 SF	32 SF	32 SF	32 SF	300 SF
B6, IB			*300 SF	32 SF	5 SF	32 SF	300 SF
M1			*300 SF	60 SF	5 SF	32 SF	NP
M2, M3, IM, TD			*300 SF	60 SF	5 SF	32 SF	300 SF

NP = Not Permitted

SF = Square Feet

R = Residential Sign

NR = Nonresidential Sign

ON = On-Premise Sign

CO = Construction Sign

DI = Directional Sign

PO = Political Sign

OFF = Off-Premise Sign

\* Limited only by maximum total area of all signs on a zoning lot as set forth in §30.30 of this chapter.

**30.30 MAXIMUM AREA OF ALL SIGN FACES AND MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SIGNS ON A SINGLE ZONING LOT.**

The maximum area of all the sign faces and the maximum number of signs on any zoning lot may not exceed the square footage and numbers set forth in the table below:

<b>ZONING DISTRICT</b>	<b>MAXIMUM PERMITTED SQUARE FOOTAGE OF ALL SIGNS ON A SINGLE LOT</b>	<b>MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SIGNS ON A SINGLE LOT</b>
R1 thru R5, IR	64 S. F.	1
B1	64 S. F.	1
B2, B3	2 x Lineal Street Frontage	NA
B4, B5 and B6	4 x Lineal Street Frontage	NA
M1, IB	3 x Lineal Street Frontage	NA
M2, M3, IM, TD	4 x Lineal Street Frontage	NA
PLI, CV, PO	2 x Lineal Street Frontage	NA

NA = Not Applicable

A temporary sign may not exceed 20 percent of the maximum area of all sign faces permitted on a single lot.

**30.31 CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS AND PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS.**

Whenever a conditional use permit is required for a planned unit development, the Plan Commission shall determine the maximum area of signs, the maximum height of signs and the number of signs to be allowed pursuant to the conditional use permit. The sign regulations contained in this chapter shall serve as guidelines in establishing the terms of the conditional use permit but shall not be regarded as the maximum limits for a sign face area, a sign face height or number of signs.

**30.32 ENFORCEMENT.**

The Division of Housing Services, the Building Inspector, and such deputies or assistants that are appointed shall enforce this chapter.

**30.33 VARIANCES.**

- (1) The Board of Appeals established in Section 1.32 of this Municipal Code is authorized to grant a variance to the requirements of this chapter upon application and hearing. However, the Board of Appeals may not grant a variance for any of the following:
  - (a) A sign height which exceeds the maximum sign height permitted by this chapter.
  - (b) Sign face area which exceeds the maximum sign face area established by this chapter.
  - (c) The construction of an off-premise sign in the Downtown Beloit Business Improvement District or in the Riverfront Conservation District.
- (2) The factors to be taken into consideration by the Board of Appeals for grant of a variance shall be as follows:
  - (a) Because of the particular physical surroundings, shape or topographical conditions of the specific property involved, a particular hardship to the owner would result, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience if the regulations were strictly applied.
  - (b) The conditions upon which a petition for a variation is based are unique to the property for which the variance is sought.
  - (c) The alleged hardship is caused by this chapter and has not been created by any persons presently having an interest in the property.
  - (d) The variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property or improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located.
  - (e) The variance will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property or substantially increase the congestion of the public streets, increase the danger of fire, endanger the public safety or substantially diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood.
- (3) The Board of Appeals may impose such conditions and restrictions upon the premises benefited by a variance as may be necessary to comply with the standards established in this section and the objectives of this chapter.
- (4) The concurring vote of 4 members of the Board of Appeals shall be necessary to grant a variance.
- (5) All decisions and findings of the Board of Appeals shall be final administrative decisions and shall be subject to judicial review as provided by law.

**30.34 PENALTY.**

Any person who violates any provision of this chapter shall be subject to a penalty as provided in section 25.04 of this Municipal Code.